The Women’s Auxiliary of Nexus was inaugurated in 1996 by three visionary women: Mrs. Wylodean Saxon, Mrs. Rosemary Briggs and Mrs. Doris Anton. They invited 30 women to lunch at The Mansion as their guests. There they discussed the agency’s mission and the disease of addiction, inviting their guests to tour Nexus.

Twenty eight went by bus to the La Prada Campus, where each woman was asked to donate $1,000 to provide vital seed money to start the Auxiliary. Those women took on the challenge and became Founding Members. They include Mrs. Kirkman C. Anton, Ms. Angie Barrett, Mrs. A.C. Black, Mrs. Charles L. Blackburn, Mrs. Ben Briggs, Mrs. Hugh M. Briggs, Mrs. Bruce Calder, Mrs. Paul Conner, Mrs. Jack Foster, Mrs. R.R. Gibbons, Mrs. Robin Glackin, Mrs. Albert G. Hill, Mrs. Caroline Rose Hunt, Mrs. Nancy Lemmon, Mrs. Henry S. Miller, Jr., Mrs. Paul E. Morgan, Mrs. Robert B. Payne, Mrs. Gene Phillips, Ms. Marjorie Purnell, Mrs. William Repetto, Mrs. Bill Saxon, Mrs. George Schutt, Mrs. Harold Simmons, Mrs. Jere Thompson, Mrs. John C. Tolleson, Mrs. James W. Vandevier, Mrs. Carl H. Wescott and Mrs. Betty K. White.

The Founding Members came from a culture of service, and they shared a core belief: that Nexus provided proven treatment for women to recover. They removed barriers for female addicts by offering full time childcare, access to medical care and transitional housing. With the funds raised by the Auxiliary, Nexus has provided vital projects, tools and resources to help pull clients up out of a life of poverty and trauma and break the cycle of addiction in their families. The Auxiliary also recognized that addiction does not discriminate; they have recommended Nexus to friends and family members of friends in need of addiction treatment.

In 1997, the Auxiliary presented Nexus with a check for $57,616 raised from membership dues and the first Holiday Bazaar Open House, establishing the tradition of Auxiliary members sharing gifts with Nexus clients and their children. In the early days, The Members’ Tea was the means to retain members and recruit new ones to the Auxiliary. Over time, fundraisers and hands-on volunteering grew to include the Nexus Texas Ball at the Eddie Dean Ranch, Art and Fashion Shows, an Annual Spring Luncheon, New Members’ Coffee, Tours, “Working Women” group events, Massage Chair Night for clients, Clothing Drives, Mentoring, Holiday Parties for the children and other vital gatherings.

Current President Betsy Chambers collaborates with her committees and Advisory Board Chair Carolyn Jones Waghorne to ensure that the vision and work of the Auxiliary remains meaningful to the clients and to those in the Dallas Community who give their time, talents and skills to raise awareness about recovery and addiction services for this unique population of women and their children.

Now, 17 years later, membership is 278 strong. Over $2,370,012 has been raised by the Women’s Auxiliary and thousands of volunteer hours have provided hands-on services to Nexus clients and their children. Next year marks a first term for incoming President Lauren Gilette, who, at 34, is the youngest woman in the Auxiliary’s history to be elected to the presidency. Looking toward an ever-brighter future, the Women’s Auxiliary Board has recognized the need to bring younger women into the fold, encouraging them to join and participate in all things Nexus.
1996 Rosemary Briggs, Doris Anton, and Wylodean Saxon found Women’s Auxiliary of Nexus.

1997 First Holiday Open House and Bazaar, establishing the tradition of members sharing gifts with clients and their children. Auxiliary presents Nexus with $57,616 for improving the La Prada campus parking lot and expanding the adolescent program to ten beds.

1998 First Nexus Texas Ball. Auxiliary raises $93,100 for two new vans and a new telephone system.

1999 Auxiliary raises $168,190 to employ a Utilization Review Specialist to ensure the continuing success of Nexus under managed care and to fund facilities improvements at the La Prada campus.

2000 Auxiliary gives $150,000 to fund two pilot programs: a volunteer department and an Aftercare Program. Full-time professional hired to maintain contact with Nexus graduates.

2000-2001 Auxiliary membership grows to more than 400. $79,845 establishes a Client Care Fund to extend a client’s length of stay when needed.

2001-2002 $50,000 allows continued support of the Aftercare Program and the Client Care Fund.

2002-2003 $70,624 funds for one year a Medical Director trained in addiction.

2003-2004 Auxiliary co-founder Wylodean Saxon dies. Memorial fund established in her name. Nexus receives the highest accreditation in medicine—the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Health Care Organizations. $135,132 funds Medical Director for another year and partial salary for a Psychiatric Fellow.

2004-2005 $152,019 funds a full-time RN, a Family Therapy Services Program, imaging equipment for admissions, and continuing support for programs.

2005-2006 “An Evening with Groucho.” $130,000 for an Outcomes Manager, a Development Associate, and continued family therapy services.

2006-2007 William Cope Moyers. Auxiliary’s largest gift ever--$204,000--for Nexus programs and a school bus for the children.


2008-2009 Auxiliary inaugurates Massage Night and Yoga for clients. $79,000 pays off new research building, renovation of main hallway and reception area, and partial salary of a detox nurse, extending Nexus’ continuum of care.

2009-2010 Auxiliary inaugurates Nexus’ 40th anniversary party. Working Women inaugurated. 2009 commitment of $300,000 for Capital Campaign is exceeded. JR Martinez. $139,000 funds the continuing implementation of the database and the operating funds for the Detoxification Program.

2012-2013 New adolescent dormitory-- The Carolyn Jones Waghorne Youth Hall-- opens with a ribbon cutting. Kristen Johnston. $106,560 allocated to the Adolescent Program and $17,775 to the Detoxification Program. The Association of Substance Abuse Programs honors Women’s Auxiliary of Nexus with the Association’s 2013 Lone Star Award. Auxiliary President Betsy Chambers accepts the award in Austin.

In its first 17 years, Women’s Auxiliary of Nexus has raised over two million dollars to improve the lives of addicted women and their families.